

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAMASC 00135 091540Z

53

ACTION CU-04

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 USIA-15 /030 W
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P R 091506Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5801

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 0135

DEPT FOR CU/ARTS FROM ESCORT LYNCH

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: OEXC, SY

SUBJECT: BENNY CARTER JAZZ QUINTET

1. MRS. CARTER IS CONCERNED OVER CARTER'S HEALTH AND HAS WONDERED IF PERHAPS TOUR SHOULDN'T BE CUT SHORT. TO AVOID A POSSIBLE PROBLEM WHICH, IF ADDED TO THE HEALTH PROBLEM, COULD TIP SCALES IN FAVOR OF EARLY RETURN TO US OR AT LEAST WOULD LEAVE MOST UNPLEASANT IMPRESSION OF TOUR IN CARTER'S MIND, WOULD APPRECIATE DEPT'S GUIDANCE ON FOLLOWING:

2. PROBLEM IS EXCESS BAGGAGE. GROUP HAS RECEIVED GIFTS, MADE PURCHASES ALONG WAY WITH RESULT THAT ALL ARE OVER THEIR 66 LBS ALLOWANCE IN VARYING AMOUNTS, SOME SUBSTANTIALLY.

3. ALTHOUGH DETAILS AND EXPLANATIONS AIR FREIGHT SHIPMENTS AND EXCESS BAGGAGE RULES MADE SEVERAL TIMES INCLUDING TIME AT BRIEFING IN LOS ANGELES, CARTER CONTENTS THAT DEPARTMENT'S AGREEMENT TO SHIP UP TO 1500 POUNDS OF INSTRUMENTS AND EQUIPMENT WAS A COMMITMENT THAT SHOULD COVER ANY EXCESS BAGGAGE. HIS VIEW IS THAT EVERYTHING GROUP CARRIES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED GROUP PROPERTIES AND THUS COVERED UP TO THE 1500 LBS IN ADDITION TO THEIR BAGGAGE ALLOWANCE. HE AND GROUP NORMALLY TRAVEL UNDER COMMERCIAL SPONSORSHIP WEHRE SPONSOR DOES COVER THEIR EXPENSE.

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4. HAVE MANAGED AVOID THIS PROBLEM UNTIL LEAVING KUWAIT

WHERE BAGGAGE WAS WEIGHED AND AN EXCESS BAGGAGE CHARGE OF 17 DINARS (ABOUT \$59) WAS MADE. WHEN CARTER INFORMED OF THIS CHARGE HE BECAME VERY UPSET AND SPEAKING FOR HIMSELF AND GROUP REFUSED TO PAY. I PAID AND GOT GROUP OFF FOR DAMASCUS ON SCHEDULE.

5. LOOKING AHEAD, HAVE NO PROBLEMS DAMASCUS TO AMMAN SINCE TRAVEL BY SURFACE; AMMAN TO CAIRO EXCESS CHARGES WILL DEPEND ON WHETHER AIR LINE WEIGHS BAGGAGE. SAME FOR CAIRO TO LONDON SHIPMENT.

6. TOUR TO DATE SUCCESSFUL AND HOPE WAY CAN BE FOUND. KEEP THIS FROM BECOMING MAJOR PROBLEM OR FROM HAVING TO DISCUSS AGAIN WITH CARTER WHO NOT WELL AND WHO BECOMES INCENSED OVER THIS.

7. ADVISE.
MURPHY

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NNN

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